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7 PHOTOCOPIER EXAMINATIONS

7.1 Objective

To determine whether a particular photocopier was used to produce a questioned photocopy; or to determine a time frame a particular photocopy was made.

7.2 References

- Ellen, David; The Scientific Examination of Documents (Second Edition); Taylor & Francis Ltd., 1997
- Foster & Freeman Ltd.; Operating Instructions Manual for the Electrostatic Detection Apparatus (ESDA)

7.3. Equipment

- stereo microscope
- magnifiers
- measuring devices
- magnetic ink detector
- ESDA

7.4 Safety Measures

Precautionary measures due to the high voltage of the ESDA are contained in the Manufacturer's Operating Instructions Manual

7.5 Procedures

- 7.5.1 These procedures may not address all aspects of any uncommon or unusual circumstances encountered during examinations.
- 7.5.2 The procedures outlined below may not be possible or necessary in every case. The order may vary depending on the case.
- 7.5.3 Examination of the questioned copy
 - 7.5.3.1 Conduct microscopic examination in order to determine physical characteristics of the toner (e.g. liquid or dry, any patterns, size of particles, color, etc.)
 - 7.5.3.2 Determine if toner is magnetic or non-magnetic.
 - 7.5.3.3 Examine paper for any picker, grabber, or roller marks. (Note: ESDA processing may reveal marks not otherwise visible with side lighting.)
 - 7.5.3.4 Determine the presence of any individual identifying features (e.g. 'trash' marks from the glass platen or drum, marks from the lid or feeder belt, marks from the fusing rollers, defects from corona wires or optics).

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7.5.4 Examination of exemplars and standards from a known machine

Examine the exemplars and standards following the same steps outlined in 7.5.3.1 through 7.5.3.4, above. Individual identifying features found on standards with a date of reproduction that coincides with that of the questioned copy may be especially helpful since photocopier defects are often transitory.

7.5.5 Comparison of questioned copy to exemplars and standards from a known machine

Compare the results obtained in 7.5.3 to those in 7.5.4. This is essentially a comparison of the questioned and known material in order to determine whether there is, or is not, agreement within the class and individual characteristics, sufficient to support a conclusion that both involved the use of the same copier.

7.5.6 Dating photocopies

Identifying characteristics from photocopiers are often transitory. If dated known samples are available they can be examined in an effort to bracket the dates when certain identifying characteristics appear, and when they disappear (or are replaced). It may be possible to determine the approximate date the questioned copy was made by establishing where those same identifying features from the questioned copy fit into the dated pattern. When preparing a CoA on a 'dating' case, consideration should be given to including the caveat that the findings are based upon the accuracy of the known sample dates provided.

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